

The Story of the Night Traveller
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Chapter 1: The Honour of Restoration

The Marriage Feast of ‘Ash‘ath ibn Qays, may Allah be pleased with him

Following his return to Islam, ‘Ash‘ath ibn Qays al-Kindī, may Allah be pleased with him, was taken into custody and presented before the Caliph, Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq, may Allah be pleased with him. The episode was recounted by Qays ibn Abī Ḥāzim, may Allah have mercy on him, who preserved every detail with fidelity.

Upon their meeting, Abū Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him, ordered that ‘Ash‘ath’s daughters be released from their bonds. Recognising his re-embrace of Islam, he not only granted him freedom but also solemnised his marriage to his own sister.

In response to this profound honour, 'Ash'ath, may Allah be pleased with him, undertook a public act of celebration both extraordinary and unprecedented. Sword in hand, he entered the camel market, and in a gesture both generous and symbolic, began severing the hamstrings of the camels and she-camels upon which his gaze fell. The people, witnessing this bold display, began to exclaim in alarm that he had returned to disbelief.

When his task was complete, he cast aside his sword and addressed the gathering with the utmost clarity.

‘Ash‘ath ibn Qays:

"By Allah! I have not returned to disbelief, but this man—Abū Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him—has married me to his sister. Had we been in our own land, our wedding feast would have been of a different kind—that is to say, far more generous."

He then turned to the people of Madinah and proclaimed:

‘Ash‘ath ibn Qays:

"O people of Madinah! Slaughter all these camels and partake of them!"

And to the owners of the beasts, he declared:

‘Ash‘ath ibn Qays:

**"O camel-owners! Come forth and collect the prices
of your camels!"**